

Mayor Charles "Skip" Lee called a meeting of the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 pm on Monday, October 15, 2012. Roll call. Present: Aldermen Barry Cox, Retha Elston, Linda Marley, Joe Martin, Lou Sotelo, and Amy Viering. Absent: None.

Also present were City Attorney Ron Coplan, City Manager Scott Shumard, Assistant to City Manager Hadley Skeffington-Vos, Director of Financial Services Cindy Von Holten, Building and Zoning Superintendent Amanda Schmidt, Acting Fire Chief Gary Cook, Police Chief Ron Potthoff, and City Clerk Marie Rombouts.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

There were no communications from Visitors.

Alderman Cox made a motion to approve the items on the Consent Agenda, as follows:

- A) Minutes from October 1, 2012
- B) Bills and Payroll totaling \$857,547.21
- C) Partial Pay Request #4 to Sjostrom & Sons for the City Hall Remodeling Project in the amount of \$235,657.00
- D) Partial Pay Request #3 for the 2012 Street Project Contract #1 to Northwest Illinois Construction in the amount of \$1,893.31
- E) Partial Pay Request #2 for the 2012 Street Contract #2 to Twin City Construction in the amount of \$63,518.42
- F) Partial Pay Request #1 for Streetscape Phase 10 to Northwest Illinois Construction in the amount of \$27,130.01
- G) Partial Pay Request #2 for Asbestos Abatement/Coliseum Project to DEM Services, Inc. in the amount of \$99,148.00
- H) Contract change order for Coliseum remodeling project for natural gas backup generator

The motion was seconded by Alderman Viering. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Cox, Elston, Marley, Martin, Sotelo, and Viering. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Building and Zoning Superintendent Amanda Schmidt introduced Collin O'Connell, Sterling's new Code Enforcement Officer.

Robert Finn with Matrix Consulting Group completed the Emergency Medical Services Study with Sterling, Rock Falls, and CGH Medical Center. Finn explained the study involved all three entities and studied merger, consolidation, or contract. Strengths and weaknesses were reviewed. Strengths included combined dispatch, shared personnel, and Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS). Challenges are staffing levels. CGH staffs extra ambulances during peak times with part-time personnel, which is difficult to do

with full-time firefighters. Shift differences between Fire and EMS, 24 and 12 hour shifts respectively, complicate consolidation. Staffing numbers would need to be consistent at all fire stations to consolidate. To add an extra firefighter at the substation could cost an extra \$105,000.

Finn reported that consolidation would need to show enhanced services and cost reductions. Consolidation offers neither.

Inter-facility transfers are not typical with fire-based emergency services because of the length of time needed for transfers. Transfers would have to be dealt with separately. Training would be a long-term investment, possibly two years.

Shared personnel of a fire chief and fire prevention officer, as well as equipment would save money for both cities. This would require no reduction in staffing or closing a station.

Building on the current program by consolidating fire prevention programs, standardizing Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), and coordinating training would increase value and save money. Increasing the role of paid-on call firefighters can also save money. Both departments have a surplus of equipment that could be shared. Regionalizing dispatch is an ultimate goal. Dispatchers have high turn-over and are understaffed. Service delivery is most important. Dispatch time and how fast units respond are two factors that can be controlled.

Alderman Elston made a motion to pass the Proclamation for Blue and White Sunday, on October 21, 2012; seconded by Alderman Viering. Mayor Lee read the proclamation into the record. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Cox, Elston, Marley, Martin, Sotelo, and Viering. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Arch Hopkins, with Hopkins & Associates, recognized Cindy Von Holten for her excellent work on the financial statements, Scott Shumard for his management, and the accounting staff. Internal control and compliance have become an important question in light of this year's activities in Dixon. Auditing has changed since 2001 with the Enron scandal and looks for more than bookkeeping accuracies. Auditing looks closer to minimize fraud in government. Through job assignments and segregation of duties, detection may be more detectable. Audit firms evaluate the following:

- internal controls with sample transactions
- outside confirmations of revenues by confirming bank balances
- role of the board – if they alert to what's happening.

Hopkins reported a clean opinion for the City, including the federal funds received.

Mayor Lee thanked Hopkins for his report and was pleased to hear about the three preventative measures that are evaluated.

Alderman Viering made a motion to accept the April 30, 2012 audited financial statements and place them on file; seconded by Alderman Sotelo. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Cox, Elston, Marley, Martin, Sotelo, and Viering. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Viering made a motion to pass **Ordinance #2012-10-31 Amending the Liquor Ordinance**, which corrects a typographical error and clarifies the hours when customers and licensees cannot be on the premises; seconded by Alderman Elston. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Cox, Elston, Marley, Martin, Sotelo, and Viering. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Elston made a motion to accept the low bid of \$19,567.19 from Reynolds Motor Company for one 2013 Ford Escape for the Code Enforcement Department; seconded by Alderman Marley. Alderman Cox stated that his vote would reflect the fact that the vehicle is not being purchased locally. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Marley, Martin, Sotelo and Viering. Nays – Alderman Cox. Motion carried.

Hadley Skeffington-Vos informed everyone that the movie, "Ghostbusters", will be shown on Friday, October 26 at the Grandon Civic Center in conjunction with Fourth Fridays downtown.

Manager Shumard reminded Council members of the special Council meeting on Tuesday at 4:30 pm in Morrison. Shumard reported the Library will be holding an Open House on Saturday, October 27 at 1:00 pm.

Shumard expressed appreciation to Cindy Von Holten for her work on the audit and noted how valuable she is to the City.

Shumard stated the highlights of his conference are to get citizens and staff engaged in the community and to inspire pride, such as a brand. Regionalism is important in these hard economic times. Urban space is being revitalized through art.

Alderman Elston asked about the status on the property on 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 401 Broadway. Attorney Coplan reported that 401 Broadway has been conveyed to the City and can, hopefully, be handled through the NSP2 program. The house of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue has been served papers with a 15 day notice to repair or demolish.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:42 pm.

Marie Rombouts  
City Clerk